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Letter dated 11 February 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I attach my assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of Colombia in August 2001 (see annex). This assessment has been prepared under my own responsibility following consultations with Member States that were members of the Security Council in 2001 and 2002, pursuant to the note of the President dated 12 June 1997 (S/1997/451), and it does not represent the views of the Council.

I should be grateful if this communication and the attached assessment could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Alfonso **Valdivieso**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 11 February 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of Colombia (August 2001)

During the month of August, the Security Council considered various conflict situations in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Middle East in the manner described in the present document. The thematic agenda dealt with the question of small arms, conflict prevention and topics arising from the wrap-up session for the month conducted at a public meeting.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia, Guillermo Fernández de Soto, presided at the beginning of the month at the public meeting on the question of small arms and, at the end of the month, at the meeting at which the resolution on that subject was adopted and at the public meeting for the wrap-up session on the work for the month.

The programme of work for the month was as follows:

(a) Three formal meetings at which two presidential statements, on small arms (S/PRST/2001/21) and on the situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (S/PRST/2001/20), were made and resolution 1366 (2001) on the prevention of armed conflict was adopted;

(b) Five public meetings, at which two general debates were held, on the Middle East, including the Palestinian question, and on the question of small arms; two briefings by the Secretariat, on the situation in Kosovo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and a wrap-up session for the month;

(c) One private meeting on the situation in East Timor, which resulted in the issuance of a communiqué on 23 August referring substantively to the topic (see appendix I);

(d) Eleven informal consultations on the topics specified in the present document, resulting in eight statements to the press (see appendix II).

Objectives proposed by Colombia

In addition to the work which the Security Council was to deal with during the month of August, Colombia proposed four objectives: first, reopen the question of small arms with regard to their impact on the maintenance of international peace and security; second, begin comprehensive consideration of the situation in Afghanistan; third, facilitate informal discussion among members of the Security Council and high-level Secretariat officials on a regional approach to conflicts in Africa; and fourth, foster a relationship between the Council and other United Nations bodies. The fulfilment of those objectives is described in the relevant sections of this report.

Africa

Sierra Leone (9 August)

The Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hédi Annabi, briefed the Council on recent developments in Sierra Leone. He noted that the phased deployment of UNAMSIL was continuing, as was the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, which might be concluded by the end of the year. The Government was sending police representatives to the districts where RUF forces were surrendering, and would request a second extension of their mandate from Parliament so as to facilitate preparations for the national elections. In addition, he mentioned the arrangements for launching the Special Court and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and concluded that the picture was encouraging. In the discussion which followed, general satisfaction was expressed with the progress made by UNAMSIL, the presence of the national police in several districts and the importance of their encounters with RUF in the disarmament process, as well as the need to strengthen the Fund for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme. Some members of the Council expressed concern about the tension in the Liberian district of Lofa and the situation of displaced persons in the country, and the wish was expressed that that would be resolved by the elections in the coming year. There was general support for the efforts of President Kabbah to meet with the presidents of the Mano River Union. A statement to the press was adopted at the conclusion of the discussion.

Angola (16 August)

The Council heard a report from the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Danilo Türk, on the 10 August attack, for which UNITA had claimed responsibility, on a passenger train 60 kilometres from Luanda, in which more than 200 people were killed and hundreds injured. Mines detonated by remote control were used in the attack, which caused the train to derail; according to reports, armed rebels fired on the passengers fleeing the accident. The Assistant Secretary-General noted that the attack had interrupted the climate of cautious optimism that had previously prevailed regarding peace in Angola. In recent months there had been a reduction in the military capability of the rebel organization as a result of Security Council sanctions, greater participation by civil society, including the Catholic Church, in the national reconciliation process and the announcement of elections for the coming year. The Council condemned the attack in a statement to the press and reaffirmed its support for a political solution to the conflict on the basis of the Lusaka Protocol and the resolutions of the Council.

Liberia (16 August)

The Security Council devoted the meeting to the consideration of the security, military and humanitarian situation in Liberia. The Secretariat briefing was provided by the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Danilo Türk, and the Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, Carolyn McAskie. The discussion centred on the implications of the selective sanctions regime imposed in March 2001 and the impact of events in Liberia on the re-establishment of peace in Sierra Leone and the stability of much of West Africa. During the consultations, reference was made to the situation in Lofa district, bordering on Guinea and Sierra Leone, the serious humanitarian situation, including estimates of the number of displaced persons and

refugees, and the response of the international community. The President issued a statement to the press reflecting the main points of the discussion.

Somalia (21 August)

The Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator gave a briefing to the Security Council during informal consultations on the humanitarian situation in Somalia. She gave a detailed account of security conditions in the field for the provision of humanitarian assistance, in addition to supplementary information on the return of refugees, the response by the international community, the work of United Nations agencies and conditions of access. During the discussion, members of the Council referred to questions of security, refugees, conflict prevention, the situation of children, anti-personnel mines and the practice of female genital mutilation. At the end of the meeting, the President of the Council issued a statement to the press based on those comments.

Burundi (24 August)

The Council considered the situation in Burundi on the basis of a briefing by the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs. He brought members up to date on the political, security and humanitarian situation, as well as the results of the recent session of the Implementation Monitoring Committee for the Arusha Agreement (15-20 August). Members of the Council in their statements referred, inter alia, to the formation of the transitional Government to be installed on 1 November; the return to the country of exiled Hutu leaders and the need for a protection force to ensure their physical safety; the political instability and the rumours of a coup d'état against President Buyoya; the unacceptable reluctance of two rebel groups to conclude a ceasefire; and support for the Great Lakes regional initiative and the Facilitator for the Arusha process, Nelson Mandela. The President of the Council made a statement to the press reflecting the main areas of the discussion.

Democratic Republic of the Congo (30 August)

The Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations briefed the Security Council on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in particular since the first organizational meeting of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, held in Gaborone, from 20 to 23 August under the auspices of the Facilitator for that process, the former President of Botswana, Mr. Ketumile Masire. The Assistant Secretary-General noted a number of positive developments, including the continuation of the ceasefire, the completion of the separation of forces and the progressive withdrawal of foreign troops, as well as the decision taken in Gaborone to convene the first meeting of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue on 15 October in Addis Ababa, headquarters of the Organization of African Unity. There had also been some negative developments, such as the humanitarian situation, the ongoing refusal of the rebel forces to demilitarize Kisangani, and fighting in the country's eastern provinces. The meeting served to set the stage for the visit by the Secretary-General to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda beginning on 1 September, accompanied by his new special representative, Amos Ngongi. Member States participating in the discussion referred to the content of this briefing and noted that they expected the next report of Sir Ketumile Masire to the Security Council on 5 September.

Asia and the Pacific

Bougainville, Papua New Guinea (14 August)

The Security Council met in informal consultations to be briefed on recent developments with respect to the peace process in Bougainville, Papua New Guinea, by Ambassador Noel Sinclair, Head of the United Nations Political Office in Bougainville (UNPOB). Ambassador Sinclair commented on the most recent agreement between the parties, the comprehensive political settlement. The settlement contains provisions on an autonomous government for Bougainville, the holding of a referendum and the implementation of a weapons disposal programme. The members of the Council expressed support for UNPOB activities and for Ambassador Sinclair, as well as for the role played by the Monitoring Group, made up of military and police observers from Australia, Fiji, New Zealand and Vanuatu. They welcomed the progress made with respect to the peace process and encouraged the parties to settle outstanding issues so that the comprehensive political settlement could be implemented. Emphasis was placed on the need to develop a weapons collection and disposal programme. The President made a statement to the press reflecting a number of aspects of the debate.

Repatriation or return of all Kuwaiti and third-country nationals (21 August)

The Council met in informal consultations to hear Ambassador Yuli Vorontsov, High-level Coordinator, introduce the fifth report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 14 of resolution 1284 (1999) (S/2001/796), concerning the repatriation or return of all Kuwaiti and third-country nationals. Ambassador Vorontsov said that he had nothing substantive to report; it was to be hoped that Iraq would decide to cooperate with the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Tripartite Commission and with him. He also said that Kuwait had indicated that it was willing to enter into a direct dialogue with Iraq on the question, provided that Iraq first of all acknowledged that it was holding Kuwaiti prisoners of war. During the debate, the members of the Council reaffirmed their unanimous support for the efforts of the High-level Coordinator, said that the matter must be dealt with as a strictly humanitarian matter and urged Iraq to cooperate fully with Ambassador Vorontsov. The President made a statement to the press reflecting a number of aspects of the debate.

East Timor (23 August)

At a private meeting, the Council heard a briefing by the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations on the preparations for the elections to a Constituent Assembly to be held on 30 August. Other Member States were free to participate in the meeting, but members of the press were not permitted to attend. The Assistant Secretary-General indicated that the electoral campaign was calm and orderly, and reported on the outcome of the security evaluation mission conducted by the United Nations Security Coordinator in West Timor. Following the murder of the UNHCR staff members in a refugee camp in West Timor, the Security Coordinator had given West Timor a level 5 security classification, which called for the withdrawal of all United Nations staff members. The security evaluation mission proposed that a memorandum of understanding be agreed with the Government of Indonesia, after which the situation in practically all parts of West Timor would be

reclassified at level 4. Following the meeting, a communiqué was issued (see appendix I).

Afghanistan (29 August)

The Council met informally for a substantive discussion, in which the Secretariat took part, of elements to be taken into account in a comprehensive approach to the situation in Afghanistan, whereby the Council would take the lead at the United Nations in dealing with the matter. This debate, which was identified as a priority issue for August, was conducted on the basis of the report prepared by the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and submitted to both the General Assembly and the Security Council (S/2001/789). The report was introduced by the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, who commented in depth on military and political developments, gave a wide-ranging description of the humanitarian and human rights situation and outlined the elements set out in the report on the comprehensive approach to be taken. Council members stressed a number of points, including the importance of avoiding military solutions to the conflict, the need to assist former poppy growers so as to prevent them from planting a new poppy crop, the need to develop a reconstruction plan for Afghanistan that took account of a political agreement, and how important it was that the Secretary-General should submit a more detailed proposal to the Security Council in October. The President made a statement to the press reflecting a number of aspects of the discussion.

Europe

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (13 August)

Meeting in informal consultations, the Security Council considered the situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in the light of the signing of the Framework Agreement between the Government and the four political parties. The United States, as the coordinator of the Contact Group, introduced a draft statement by the President of the Security Council in the course of the consultations. The statement (S/PRST/2001/20) was adopted at a formal meeting on 13 August; in the statement, the Security Council welcomed, inter alia, the signing of the Framework Agreement in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia by President Trajkovski and the leaders of four political parties on 13 August 2001, and called for the full and immediate implementation of the Agreement, which promotes the peaceful and harmonious development of civil society while respecting the ethnic identity and the interests of all Macedonian citizens.

Kosovo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (28 August)

At a public meeting, the Council heard a briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, in which he commented in detail on developments over the past month in Kosovo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The briefing and subsequent statements by Member States taking part in the meeting focused principally on two issues. First, various aspects of the preparations for the general election to be held on 17 November were discussed. Explicit references were made to the procedure being followed to encourage registration by minority voters; emphasis was placed on the improved relationship between the United

Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and Belgrade; the Under-Secretary-General described the action being taken to improve the security situation and further consolidate the rule of law. The second question raised at the meeting concerned relations between UNMIK and the Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, in view of a number of accusations made by the Government about the lack of commitment of UNMIK and KFOR with regard to curbing the collaboration of Kosovo Albanian extremists with the National Liberation Army in Macedonia. A number of delegations took the opportunity in the debate to point to the need to lift the sanctions imposed on Yugoslavia in resolution 1160 (1998).

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

The President of the Security Council received a communication from the Representatives of Mali and Qatar, on behalf of the Islamic Group (S/2001/797), requesting that a meeting should be convened immediately to consider the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. On 16 August, meeting informally, under "Other matters", the Council considered the request and decided to convene a public meeting of the Council in order to hold an open debate on the subject. The open debate was held on 20 and 21 August.

At the request of Norway and the United Kingdom, informal consultations were held on 23 August to review the situation. At the meeting, the representative of the United Kingdom, on behalf of his own delegation and that of Norway, introduced a draft statement by the President. A number of delegations made statements commenting on the United Kingdom proposal. It became clear in the course of the debate that the Council would be unable to reach a consensus on the format to be used for a Council decision on the matter. While one group of countries said that they were willing to use the format of a statement by the President, other delegations indicated that they would not even consider the draft text. The United Kingdom called on Council members to consult their Governments and requested the President to convene informal consultations the following day to take a final decision on the approach to be taken.

On 24 August, the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question, was considered once again in informal consultations. In the course of the exchange of views, it became clear that there was no consensus in favour of taking up negotiations on the draft statement by the President introduced by the United Kingdom and Norway. The President announced that the item would be considered at a later date.

Other matters

Small arms (2 August)

This was a priority item during the presidency of Colombia. The open debate was presided over by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia, Guillermo Fernández de Soto, in the presence of the Secretary-General. In his statement, the Secretary-General underlined, among other things, the important progress achieved by the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. He stressed that small arms were easy to buy, easy to use, easy to transport and easy to conceal. Their proliferation exacerbated conflict,

provoked refugee flows, undermined the rule of law and spawned a culture of violence and impunity. It was not just a question of disarmament, it was also a question of development, democracy, human rights and human security. There were no simple solutions, and no single method for dealing with the impact of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Political commitments could make a critical difference in saving lives and easing suffering. The Council had a major role to play in making small arms a focus of urgent global attention, which was a central aspect of international peace and security.

In August, the Security Council took an important step in the consideration of the question of small arms. Following that open debate, a presidential statement (S/PRST/2001/21) was drawn up, incorporating the views of Council members and other Members of the United Nations that participated in the debate enthusiastically and with constructive proposals. The statement will be a roadmap for the Security Council's future positions on the subject.

The presidential statement defines various aspects of the subject, and in it, inter alia, the Secretary-General is requested to submit by September 2002 a report containing specific recommendations on ways in which the Security Council might contribute to dealing with the question of illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in situations under its consideration, taking into account the views of Member States, recent experiences in the field and the contents of the statement.

The combination of open debate and presidential statement made it possible to attain a number of objectives. First, it permitted follow-up on the question of small arms two years after its inclusion in the Security Council's agenda on 24 September 1999. Second, the handling of the question specifically in those conflict situations under consideration in the Security Council was critically examined, and better foundations were laid for including explicit references in resolutions and presidential statements relating to specific situations. Third, the Council's view of the subject was broadened through the active participation of non-member countries. Lastly, a number of actions by the Security Council in implementation of the Programme of Action adopted on 20 July by the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects were outlined.

Prevention of armed conflict (30 August)

Resolution 1366 (2001), concerning the prevention of armed conflict, was adopted at a formal meeting. Its adoption was the culmination of an arduous process of negotiation that began at the end of June when the delegation of Bangladesh submitted a first version for consideration by the members of the Security Council, which followed a report of the Secretary-General on the question.

Regional approach to conflicts in Africa

A regional approach to conflicts in Africa was another of Colombia's priorities during its presidency. In an informal exchange of views known as the "Princeton meeting", Security Council members, senior Secretariat officials and members of the academic community considered the possibilities for and the difficulties of a regional approach to conflict management in Africa, with special emphasis on West Africa and the Great Lakes region.

The Security Council normally approaches conflicts in Africa primarily from a national perspective. However, this meeting was a response to the need to give careful consideration to the intention of the United Nations to apply a regional or subregional approach, as demonstrated by the Inter-Agency Mission to West Africa in its report to the Security Council (S/2001/434). The members of the Council exchanged views on its contribution to that conflict-prevention, peacemaking and peace-building initiative in Africa, and the main points of this analysis were circulated as a Security Council document (S/2001/1174).

Dialogue with the Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly on Security Council reform (30 August)

In June 2001, the ambassadors of the United Kingdom, Bangladesh (President of the Security Council that month) and Colombia were requested to establish a dialogue with the Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly on Security Council reform. During the dialogue, there was a valuable exchange of views, which the ambassadors reported to the Council members at the informal consultations on 30 August. The presentation by the representatives of those three States gave rise to a productive exchange of views among the members of the Council on reforms in its procedures, many of which were reiterated at the wrap-up session the following day.

Wrap-up discussion for the month (31 August)

The Security Council held the wrap-up discussion for the month of August at a public meeting. The meeting was presided over by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia, Guillermo Fernández de Soto. In his statement, the Minister stressed, inter alia, the objectives set by Colombia for its presidency and the month's achievements.

The meeting provided an unusual opportunity to assess critically the ways and means used by the Security Council to fulfil its responsibility in the maintenance of international peace and security. More specifically, the meeting reflected on the particular experiences of the work of the Council during the month of August and reaffirmed that the monthly presidencies are interconnected and interdependent occurrences, not isolated events. Council members referred to lessons arising from the consideration of the month's agenda, as well as to procedural issues such as the conduct of work (transparency, the provisional programme, schedules), the quality and pertinence of the oral briefings presented to the Council by the Secretariat and the contents of the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly. A number of members referred to the benefits and usefulness of meetings such as the one convened that month on regional approaches to conflict management in Africa (the "Princeton meeting").

Closing remarks

During Colombia's presidency, a genuine effort was made towards transparency in the Council's work, through detailed briefings to countries that are not members of the Council, continual updating of the information on the Council available on Colombia's web page (www.un.int/colombia) and the permanent willingness of our representatives to provide answers to and cooperate with any member of the United Nations that so requested.

Appendix I
Official communiqué of the 4358th (closed) meeting of the Security Council

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

"At its 4358th meeting, held in private on 23 August 2001, the Security Council considered the item entitled 'The situation in East Timor'.

"The President, with the consent of the Council, invited the representatives of Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Indonesia, Japan, Mexico, Namibia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Portugal, the Republic of Korea and Sweden at their request, to participate in the discussion of the item without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

"The Security Council heard a briefing under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure by Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations. Giving the details of the election arrangements, Mr. Annabi informed the Council that the electoral campaign in East Timor so far had been conducted in a peaceful manner. He said that political parties and the population at large had shown strong support for the pact of national unity.

"The members of the Council, as well as the representative of Belgium emphasized the importance of the peaceful conduct of the August 30 elections. They believed that a peaceful, democratic process would be a major first step towards East Timor's independence in a complex process of stabilization in East Timor. Speakers encouraged a spirit of peace, democracy and tolerance throughout the electoral process and beyond, and joined the Secretary-General in supporting the heroic efforts of the East Timorese people and in urging a large voter turn-out.

"Mr. Annabi responded to the comments and questions."

Appendix II
Statements to the press made by the President of the Security Council

Afghanistan (29 August)

Members of the Security Council considered the report of the Secretary-General and were briefed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs on the situation in Afghanistan.

They expressed grave concern regarding the plight of the Afghan people. They called on the warring sides, in particular the Taliban, to stop the fighting which has led to human rights abuses, permitted terrorists to find a safe haven and created one of the world's worst humanitarian crises. They also expressed concern over the implications of the situation in Afghanistan for regional peace and security.

They agreed that a comprehensive approach to Afghanistan could help end the conflict, promote peace and rehabilitation of the country, and address the concerns of the international community, such as terrorism, refugees, human rights and the

humanitarian suffering of the Afghans. In this regard, they noted the steps taken by the Taliban to implement a poppy ban, which should help counter-narcotics efforts.

They expressed support for the meeting of the Afghanistan Support Group and the "six plus two group", to be convened in Geneva in October, to mobilize support for the rehabilitation of former poppy cultivators. In that regard, they call on the donor community to extend further assistance to the people of Afghanistan and to respond to the Consolidated Appeal.

They look forward to the proposals of the Secretary-General on a comprehensive approach in early October. They agreed to revert to the issue of a comprehensive approach shortly thereafter with the aim of taking appropriate action in the autumn.

They again called on the parties, in particular the Taliban, to resume negotiations for a peaceful resolution of the conflict and towards creating a broad-based, representative and accountable government.

They expressed their strong support for the central role of the United Nations to help bring peace to Afghanistan, and encouraged the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to continue his efforts in that direction.

They deplored the continued human rights abuses, in particular the discrimination against women and girls, including access to education and employment, the closure of offices of the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan in the provinces, and restrictions on the delivery of humanitarian aid, especially the recent arrest of Afghan and foreign humanitarian personnel, and called on the Taliban to ensure the safe and unhindered access of relief personnel and aid to all those in need.

They condemned the Taliban's continued support for international terrorism, refusal to turn over Usama bin Laden, and failure to comply with its resolutions 1333 (2000) and 1267 (1999), and confirmed that a comprehensive approach to Afghanistan must include full compliance with its decisions.

Angola (16 August)

Members of the Security Council strongly condemn UNITA's 10 August terrorist attack on a civilian train near the town of Maria Teresa. As in previous attacks, such as Caxito, UNITA personnel deliberately targeted civilians. Members call on the international community to provide humanitarian assistance to the large number of Angolans who are fleeing from those attacks.

Members of the Council reiterated their call on UNITA to implement immediately and fully its commitments under the 1994 Lusaka Protocol and to engage seriously in the search for peace.

Members of the Council reiterated their support for all existing sanctions against the UNITA faction headed by Jonas Savimbi, pending the organization's full implementation of its Lusaka Protocol obligations.

Members of the Council remain committed to a peaceful solution to the Angolan conflict on the basis of the Lusaka Protocol and relevant Security Council resolutions and urge that concrete steps be taken to advance such a solution.

Members of the Council reiterate their support for the preparations under way for holding elections in 2002 in Angola and state that such actions by UNITA should not be allowed to stymie those efforts.

Bougainville, Papua New Guinea (14 August)

Members of the Security Council heard a briefing from the Head of the United Nations Political Office in Bougainville.

This was the first time Council members had discussed the situation in Bougainville since March 2001.

They welcomed continued progress in negotiations between the Government of Papua New Guinea and the Bougainville parties and, in particular, noted the 7 August endorsement, in principle, by the National Executive Council of the Government of Papua New Guinea, of a comprehensive political settlement.

Members of the Council encouraged the parties to work flexibly and in a spirit of cooperation to resolve outstanding issues, so that the settlement can be formally agreed and its implementation proceed as soon as possible.

Members of the Council expressed the view that development of a comprehensive political settlement with provisions for the establishment of an autonomous government in Bougainville, for an eventual referendum and for a weapons disposal programme was an important step towards final, peaceful settlement of the conflict. They looked forward to its finalization.

Members of the Council noted the important role of the Peace Monitoring Group in helping to establish the environment in which the peace process has been able to proceed.

They noted that the United Nations Political Office in Bougainville has consistently played an important good offices role. The Office should continue this role, including with regard to weapons collection and disposal.

Burundi (24 August)

Members of the Security Council reiterated support for the decisions adopted on 23 July by the Fifteenth Summit of the Regional Initiative on Burundi and for the efforts of the Arusha Facilitator, Nelson Mandela, and of the Vice-President of South Africa, Jacob Zuma.

Members of the Council took note of the positive relationships that have developed between the political parties and encouraged them to continue to work together to install the transitional Government on 1 November.

Members of the Council called on the Government and the parties to ensure that the necessary conditions, including security protection, are put in place as soon as possible in order to facilitate the return of exiled political leaders.

Members of the Council urged the Forces for National Liberation (FNL) and the Front for the Defence of Democracy (FDD) to enter into negotiations for a cessation of hostilities without further delay.

Members of the Council remained deeply concerned at the humanitarian situation in Burundi and urged all parties to respect human rights and international

humanitarian law, as well as to facilitate access by humanitarian personnel to populations in need.

Members of the Council called on countries of the region to use their collective and individual influence to help the parties advance positively in the peace process.

Repatriation or return of all Kuwaiti and third-country nationals (21 August)

Members of the Security Council reviewed the latest report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 14 of resolution 1284 (1999), concerning missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals.

Members of the Council once again expressed their unanimous support for the work of the Secretary-General's High-level Coordinator for missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals and for his efforts to bring this matter to a satisfactory conclusion.

Members of the Council expressed deep concern at the continuing plight of missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals and their families which has remained unresolved for 10 years and expressed their hope that this issue would continue to be dealt with as a strictly humanitarian one by all sides concerned and be resolved urgently.

Members of the Council stressed the importance of dialogue among all parties, including the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Tripartite Commission, and urged Iraq to cooperate fully with Ambassador Vorontsov in fulfilling his mandate as set out in Security Council resolution 1284 (1999) and with all other agencies and bodies dealing with the issue.

Liberia (16 August)

Members of the Council express concern at the continuation of the fighting in Liberia and urge the parties involved to show restraint and engage in dialogue.

Members of the Council welcome the meeting of the Mano River Union Foreign Ministers from 13 to 15 August, and express the hope that the initiative will facilitate and broaden prospects for enhanced cooperation and sustainable peace throughout the subregion and encourage the ongoing initiatives aimed at promoting a meeting of the heads of State of the Mano River Union.

Members of the Council call on the Liberian Government to pursue all peaceful avenues towards ending the fighting inside the country, which is causing severe humanitarian consequences.

Members of the Council stress the need for human rights abuses, by whatever parties they are committed, to cease.

Members of the Council invite the international community, in particular humanitarian organizations, to continue to provide the necessary assistance to the populations affected by the conflict, and call on the donor community to maintain its commitments in providing humanitarian aid to Liberia.

Members of the Council call on the Government of Liberia to allow safe access to humanitarian agencies and invite all the parties to create the conditions for

providing humanitarian assistance to the refugees and displaced persons and to ensure the security of their camps.

Members of the Council reaffirm the need to comply fully with the embargo under its resolution 1343 (2001) prohibiting arms flows to the territory of Liberia.

Members of the Council encourage the Mano River Union Women's Peace Network and other civil society groups to continue their useful efforts to facilitate peace and dialogue in the Mano River Union region.

Members of the Council encourage the Liberian authorities to continue the efforts aimed at national reconciliation.

Democratic Republic of the Congo (14 August)

Members of the Council reiterate their strong support for the Inter-Congolese Dialogue and for the efforts of the Facilitator, Sir Ketumile Masire, and his team in the field.

Members of the Council welcome the holding of the preparatory meeting, to take place on 20 August with the Facilitator of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, and call on the Congolese parties to do their utmost to ensure that the meeting is a success.

Members of the Council share the Facilitator's concern about the inadequate representation of Congolese women at the preparatory meeting. They support the Facilitator's appeal to the Congolese parties signatories to the Lusaka Agreement to increase the representation of women at the meeting.

Members of the Council underline the importance of the role of women in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue and of ensuring that the process incorporates a gender perspective, as called for in Council resolution 1325 (2000).

Members of the Council await with interest the information to be provided by Sir Ketumile Masire on the outcome of the preparatory meeting and its follow-up.

Sierra Leone (9 August)

Members of the Security Council heard a briefing by the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations on the latest developments in Sierra Leone.

Members of the Council welcomed the progress made in Sierra Leone in the last two months, in particular the further deployment of UNAMSIL in the country as soon as possible before October 2001, and the impressive inflow into the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programme over the period.

They noted, however, that this needs to be followed up with substantive progress in other areas such as the extension of Government authority throughout the country, including the deployment of a robust police presence, before credible conditions for elections can be obtained.

They encouraged the donor community to make further urgent contributions to the DDR Trust Fund to enable reintegration benefits to be provided, and underlined the importance of speedy progress on developing reintegration programmes.

They supported President Kabbah's efforts to promote confidence-building measures in the Mano River Union, including a possible summit of the leaders.

Members of the Council noted the moratorium on diamond mining announced by the Government of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and encouraged the Government to come forward with a long-term strategy for managing the diamond districts.

They expressed concern about the violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by renegade members of the Civil Defence Force (CDF) and RUF and called on all parties to refrain from the use of force.

Members of the Council stressed the importance of the development of a fully worked up strategy by the Government of Sierra Leone and other partners for the holding of elections as soon as conditions permit, and looked forward also to seeing an outline of UNAMSIL's plans to support the process as soon as possible.

They welcomed the Secretariat's intention to send a planning mission to Sierra Leone and the recent further contributions to the funding of the Special Court, and underlined the importance of donors fulfilling existing pledges quickly and the need for new contributions.

They underlined the importance of planning on the Court to be taken forward in close coordination with the work of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Somalia (21 August)

Members of the Security Council had a briefing by the Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator on the humanitarian situation in Somalia.

Members of the Council discussed the humanitarian situation in the overall context of the conflict in Somalia.

They noted the improvement in the humanitarian and security situation, but stressed that a substantive and definite improvement in the humanitarian situation cannot be sustained without significant progress in the settlement of the conflict and political reconciliation.

Members of the Council call upon the Somali parties to ensure respect for international humanitarian law and facilitate free and unhindered access for humanitarian assistance.

They urged the parties to ensure the safety and security of aid workers.

They called on the donor community to extend general assistance by responding to the Inter-Agency Coordinator's appeal. They stressed the importance of support to the United Nations agencies and national and international non-governmental organizations in addressing the humanitarian needs of the Somali people and facilitating the peace process.

Members of the Council expressed support for the work of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) as well as non-governmental organizations on preventing female genital mutilation.

Members of the Council look forward to the comprehensive report of the Secretary-General on the Somali situation due in September.